DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 258 404 EC 172 924

AUTHOR Connelly, James B.
TITLE The Brigance Inventories and the CST Process.
PUB DATE Apr 85
NOTE 22p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the Council for Exceptional Children (63rd, Anaheim, CA, April 15-19, 1985).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Diagnostic Tests; *Disabilities; Elementary Secondary Education; *Individualized Education Programs; Skill Analysis; *Test Use
IDENTIFIERS *Brigance Diagnostic Inventories; *Child Study Teams

ABSTRACT

Data describing a student's present skill levels are often difficult for all members of a Child Study Team (CST) to understand, and these data often do not readily lend themselves to developing specific goals and objectives for an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The Brigance Diagnostic Inventories (the Inventory of Early Development, the Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills, and the Inventory of Essential Skills) use a format that facilitates the understanding of a child's skills, and it combines test results with scopes and sequences for considering and choosing objectives. This is useful for increasing the involvement of the CST members, especially parents. A stepwise method of incorporating the Inventories into the IEP is presented with examples. (Author/CL)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED258404

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

The Brigance Inventories and the CST process

Paper Presented at the 63rd Annual Convention

Council for Exceptional Children

James B. Connelly

North Slope Borough School District

Barrow, Alaska

Running Head: Brigance

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

James B. Connelly

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Abstract

Data describing a student's present skill levels are often difficult for all members of a Child Study Team (CST) to understand, and these data often do not readily lend themselves to developing specific goals and objectives for an IEP. The Brigance Diagnostic Inventories use a format that facilitates the understanding of a child's skills, and it conflates test results with scopes and sequences for considering and choosing objectives. This is especially useful for increasing the involvement of the CST members, especially parents. A stepwise method of incorporating the Inventories into the IEP is presented with examples.

The Brigance Inventories and the CST Process

The Child Study Team (CST) process commits its members to be responsible for an exceptional student's needs. A major responsibility is the collective development of appropriate goals and objectives, written in an IEP. The development of these goals and objectives should be related to knowledge of the student's present skills; this is acquired mainly from careful observations and the administration of published and/or teacher-made tests. However, developing goals and objectives from these data often becomes an unduly cumbersome and/or abstruse process, especially for parents, because the test results 1) can be difficult to interpret meaningfully, 2) may not directly lend themselves to choosing and developing specific goals and objectives, and/or 3) may not be understood by some members. If an easily understandable, common framework from which to describe the student's skills and to develop goals and objectives were available, IEP development would not only be more less recondite and more efficient, but it would better meet the spirit and letter of the law.

The purpose of this paper is to present a method for using the Brigance Diagnostic Inventories (Brigance, 1978, 1981, 1983) to develop IEP goals and objectives. The rationale and procedure presented in this paper can be applied to any of the three Inventories and with populations other than exceptional children. (Some schools use the Inventories with all students.) The Inventories are thorough

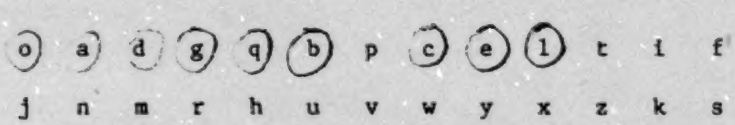
and easily understandable criterion-referenced tests which also succinctly provide a "scope and sequence" of most fundamental academic skills. They are widely favored for testing in special education: a recent nation-wide survey (Connelly, 1985) indicates that the Inventories are the fifth most commonly preferred measures of academic achievement among special education teachers, preferred by 26% of them in a nation-wide survey. However, little has been written about their applications in developing an IEP.

The Brigance Diagnostic Inventories

It is beyond the scope of this article to instruct the reader in the administration of the Inventories, but a brief description is provided, followed by a procedure for incorporating the Inventories into the IEP. The reader is referred to the Inventories themselves, to Salvia and Ysseldyke (1981) who provide a succinct description and evaluation, and to McLoughlin and Lewis (1981) for commentary and recommendations.

There are three Brigance Diagnostic Inventories, and each deals with a different age or grade level: The Inventory of Early Development (IED, ages 0 through 6); the Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills (CIBS, grades K through 6); and the Inventory of Essential Skills (IES, grades 7 through 12). The Inventories emphasize from 11 to 26 academic skills such as Word Analysis, Number Facts, Writing, and Spelling. (The IED includes gross motor and self help skills.) Each skill is divided into subskills, and each subskill

contains a comprehensive set of components. The test protocol is well organized, and all of the components are clearly displayed. Except for the few skill tests which give grade level estimates, the results are neither quantified nor translated into standard scores. Rather, the components in each subskill are listed as they hierarchially appear in most school textbooks, with the grade level at which they appear subscribed next to them. The protocol, therefore, appears as a scope and sequence, and the CST members may consider or choose specific objectives from it. In this way the Inventories can "tie the gap" between test results and developing goals and objectives; they are from the same source. For example, in one subskill of the CIBS Readiness subtest, Reads Lowercase Letters, all lowercase letters are printed in both the test booklet and protocol. Each letter correctly read by the child is circled in the test booklet. The incorrect ones are not marked. It may look like this:



It is now very clear to the CST members exactly what lowercase letters the child can read, and the group can easily decide which letters, if any, should be established as objectives to achieve a goal. Since the subskill components are listed hierarchially, the protocol can be used as a guide from which to choose objectives.

Maximum participation in the process is thus encouraged: 1) the test results are clear and easy to understand; 2) goals and objectives taken from the Inventory are directly related to the test results; 3) everyone is speaking the same language. This is especially helpful to parents, who are often very unfamiliar with "test" results, "scopes and sequences," and the selection of objectives.

The Inventories and the IEP Process

In order to expeditiously incorporate a Brigance Inventory into the IEP process and to best serve the needs of the child, two points must be kept in mind: 1) The Inventories are more useful for investigating basic academic skills such as reading, math, spelling, and writing, and they are limited in their coverage of such areas as specific language development, adaptive behaviors, and gross motor skills (after the first-grade); and 2) the choosing of goals and objectives should not be circumscribed to the Inventories. Keeping these points in mind, steps with examples for using the Inventories to develop goals and objectives follow. These steps have been condensed to include only those portions of the special education referral and placement procedure in which the Inventory is incorporated; it is assumed that the reader is familiar with, and has developed a procedure for, the entire referral and placement process.

STEP 1 - Decide Which Sections of the Inventory to Use

Determine the areas of concern, such as oral reading, addition, subtraction, and/or spelling. These may be determined in one's usual manner, by student products, teacher observations, informal testing, norm-referenced testing, Brigance Inventory grade level estimates, or any combination of these. Decide which subskills of an Inventory should be admnistered to give an indepth assessment of the area of concern. A recommended approach is to administer norm-reference tests to obtain grade level estmates then administer subskills of an Inventory which appear to be related to the areas of concern. This provides norm-referenced measures with an accompanying analyses of specific components.

Example:

Tom's fourth grade teacher feels that his reading skills are very weak, especially when viewed in relation to his other on-grade level skills. Tom "word calls" when reading orally and has poor comprehension of passages read aloud or silently. An Informal Reading Inventory was administered, and Tom attained a first-grade level score. The Woodcock Readng Mastery Test was administered and Tom attained a low first and a high second grade level score in the Word Attack and Passage Comprehension subtests, respectively. It was felt that word attack skills should be investigated to determine specific skill strengths and deficits in phonics and sight word knowledge. Sections of the Word Analysis and all of the Functonal Word

Recognition skill areas in the Inventory were administered.

STEP 2 - Administer the Inventory

Brigance Inventory testing is more "informal" than most testing. If the exminer knows that a child can pass an item, it should not be tested but simply "passed" in the Inventory. For example, a teacher may already have enough math worksheet samples to know whether a child can add two-digit numbers with or without regrouping, or a classroom teacher is already very aware of a child's specific readiness skills. Otherwise, items are administered as described in the Inventory. Circle the items that the child passes, either by test administration or teacher observations, in pencil; leave blank those which the child cannot do. Record the date of testing on the inside cover of the Inventory, next to the word "pencil." Copy the results to give to the parents at the CST meeting.

Example:

Insert Figure 1 about here

STEP 3 - Present the Results

At the CST meeting, give the copy of the Inventory to the parents and discuss the test format with everyone. Describe each skill tested and explain that the child can do those which have been circled. This

tends to create a positive atmosphere: the results are straightfoward and easy to understand, and the emphasis is on what the child can do. Present other data as appropriate. Explain that all of the members must decide together what the child's program will be, and that the Inventory can be used as a guide to help choose goals and objectives.

STEP 4 - Decide Goals and Objectives

Obtain agreement as to the areas which require remedial assistance, and collectively define the appropriate goals. Explain that the Brigance can be used as a "scope and sequence" to help choose objectives related to achieving these goals. Review the protocol and decide which subskills should be targeted to help meet each goal. Invariably, the most important items are those which immediately follow and are interspersed with ones that the child has passed. Underline the appropriate items in blue; if appropriate, have the parents underline these in their copy, or this may be done for them by anyone present. Having the parents underline, however, has the benefit of increasing their involvement in the process.

Example:

Insert Figure 2 about here

STEP 5 - Write the IEP

Write the first goal in the IEP. For example, the goal in reading may be to "Improve decoding skills," or it may be more omnibus in order to "Improve reading skills." After this and each succeeding goal, the related objectives underlined in the Inventory are included as follows: "(Student's name) will pass all items underlined in blue in Section (section letter), (section name), in the Brigance (level) attached." Attach the entire Inventory or the incorporated pages to the IEP. In this way, the Inventory's pages which have items underlined in blue are part of the IEP itself; the objectives are based on the part of the "scope and sequence" with which the child displayed difficulty.

Example:

Insert Figure 3 about here

STEP 6 - IEP Review

Test the child on the objectives listed in the IEP, plus any other areas of concern as appropriate; objectives from the Inventory have been underlined in blue. Test in the same fashion as described in Step 2, but use a blue pencil to circle all the correct items, whether or not they were previously underlined as objectives. Record

the date of testing on the inside cover, next to the name of the color "blue."

Example:

Insert Figure 4 about here

Step 7 - Present the Results and Decide Goals and Objectives

Request the parents to bring the previous IEP. Present the protocol (and other data) in the same manner as in Step 3, pointing out the items the child was able to pass, now circled in blue. Ask the parents to circle these also. If the child continues to need special services, collectively define goals as in Step 4 and underline the objectives, using a red pencil this time.

Example:

Insert Figure 5 about here

Step 8 - Write the IEP

Write the goals and objectives in the IEP exactly as in Step 5, but the Inventory's objectives are now referred to as "underlined in red."

Example:

Insert Figure 6 about here

Step 9 and beyond

Follow steps 6 through 8, changing the color coding as indicated in the inside cover of the Inventory test booklet. For example, in the third IEP review the items passed by the child would be circled in red and the objectives would be underlined in black.

Summary and Conclusions

The Brigance Inventories, used as outlined in the steps above, can increase clarity, efficiency, and participation in developing an IEP. The assessment results are not converted into standard scores, and they can be easily understood by persons not familiar with "testing." The protocol in which the results are presented also provides scopes and sequences from which to consider and/or choose objectives, and this can become part of the IEP itself. The above features are enhanced by the color-coding system which vividly presents the results and objectives. The entire IEP process becomes simpler, and the parents (and others) become more involved. Also, detailed objectives can be included in the IEP without the necessity of extensive writing and a precise method of evaluating each is "built in."

The Inventories are important diagnostic and remedial tools. They are very thorough in their coverage of basic academic skills and accompanying subskills (which are helpfully arranged hierarchially). As the student is successively evaluated, patterns often emerge which may be useful in ongoing diagnoses. The Inventories help to insure consistency; after an annual review, or when a student is promoted in grade, works with a new special education teacher, or moves to a different building, the Inventories can provide clear objectives, a method to precisely evaluate progress, and a guide to developing an ongoing program.

It is important for those involved not to feel circumscribed to using the Inventories in assessment and/or choosing objectives. This is especially true when considering behavioral objectives such as speed of response, time on task, and the completion of work. However, with basic academic skills, one will usually find the Inventories to be almost "omnibus" criterion-referenced assessment tools and have well-organized scopes and sequences.

Those who incorporate the Inventories into the CST process will undoubtedly create variations and improvements for selecting subtests, coordinating assessments, involving parents, and evaluating progress. The most important use of the Inventories, in the author's opinion, is that they enable parents to better understand and participate in the CST process. Parents will often ask more questions, make more program suggestions, and practice and reinforce objectives at home. Parental

involvement and enthusiasm is undoubtably one of the most important elements in the process of educating exceptional children; this not only helps to meet the spirit and letter of the law, but to remediate the child's difficulties as well.

References

Brigance, A. Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development. North Billerca, Massachusetts: Curriculum Associates, 1978.

Brigance, A. Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Essential Skills. North Billerca, Massachusetts: Curriculum Associates, 1981.

Brigance, A. Brigance Diagnostic Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills. North Billerca, Massachusetts: Curriculum Associates, 1983.

Connelly, J. Published tests - which ones do special education teachers perceive as useful? The Journal of Special Education, 1985, in press.

McLoughlin, J. & Lewis, R. Assessing Special Students: Strategies and Procedures. Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1981.

Salvia, J. & Ysseldyke, J. Assessment in Special and Remedial Education. New Jersey: Houghton Mifflin, 1981.

Figure 1

Results of the First Administration of Two Subskill Sections of the Brigance CIBS*

Pronounces Written Initial Consonants:

(1.) m	(4.) j	7. s	10. f	13. l	16. w	19. k
(2.) b	(5.) g	(8.) d	11. c (k)	14. t	17. z	20. q
(3.) h	(6.) r	(9.) n	12. p	15. y	18. v	21. c (s)

Substitutes Long Vowel Sounds:

(1.) $\bar{a}$ (2.) $\bar{e}$ 3. $\bar{i}$ 4. $\bar{o}$ 5. $\bar{u}$

* ( ) = pencil

Figure 2

Objectives Chosen by the CST, Based on the

Results of the First Administration

Pronounces Written Initial Consonants:

(1) m	(4) j	7. s	10. f	13. l	16. w	19. k
(2) b	(5) g	(8) d	11. c (k)	14. t	17. z	20. q
(3) h	(6) r	(9) n	12. p	15. y	18. v	21. c (s)

Substitutes Long Vowel Sounds:

(1) $\bar{a}$ (2) $\bar{e}$ 3. $\bar{i}$ 4. $\bar{o}$ 5. $\bar{u}$

* ◯ = pencil
_ _ _ = blue

Figure 3

Written IEP - First Year

Goal #1: John will increase his knowledge of word attack skills

Short Term Objectives:

1. John will pass all items underlined in red in Section F, Word Analysis, in

the Brigance CIBS attached.

2. John will pass all items underlined in red in Section G, Functional Word

Recognition, in the Brigance CIBS attached.

This document was received without the attachments referred to in Figure 3.

Figure 4

Results of the Second Administration of Two Subskill Sections of the Brigance CIBS*

Pronounces Written Initial Consonants:

(1.) m	(4.) j	(7.) s	(10.) f	(13.) l	(16.) w	19. k
(2.) b	(5.) g	(8.) d	11. c (k)	(14.) t	17. z	20. q
(3.) h	(6.) r	(9.) n	(12.) p	(15.) y	18. v	21. x (s)

Substitutes Long Vowel Sounds:

(1.) ā (2.) ē (3.) ī (4.) ō 5. ū

* ( ) = pencil
___ = blue

Figure 5

Objectives Chosen by the CST, Based on the

Results of the Second Administration

Pronounces Written Initial Consonants:

1. m	4. j	7. s	10. f	13. l	16. w	19. k
2. b	5. g	8. d	11. c (k)	14. t	17. z	20. q
3. h	6. r	9. n	12. p	15. y	18. v	21. c (s)

Substitutes Long Vowel Sounds:

1. ā 2. ē 3. ī 4. ō 5. ū

* ○ = pencil
_ _ _ = blue
. . . . . = red

Figure 6

Written IEP - Second Year

Goal #1: John will increase his knowledge of word attack skills

Short Term Objectives:

1. John will pass all items underlined in red in Section F, Word Analysis, in

the Brigance CIBS attached.

2. John will pass all items underlined in red in Section G, Functional Word

Recognition, in the Brigance CIBS attached.

This document was received without the attachments referred to in Figure 6.